

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

ACEVEDO VILA, Anibal (Democrat)
Resident Commissioner, Puerto Rico
Elected 2000 to 107th Congress



BACKGROUND

Born: Hato Rey, Puerto Rico -- 13 Feb 1962

Home: San Juan, Puerto Rico

Marital status: Married (Luisa Gandara) - 2 children

Religion: Roman Catholic

Education: Univ. of Puerto Rico, B.S., 1982; J.D., 1985; Harvard Univ., LL.M., 1987

Military: None

Profession: Lawyer; public official

Political: Defeated incumbent Resident Commissioner Carlos Romero-Barcelo (D) by a narrow margin (49% of the vote). Served as an aide to then-Gov Rafael Hernandez Colon (1989-92). Puerto Rico House of Representatives (1993-2000); minority leader (1997-2000).

Resident Commissioner Acevedo Vila, a liberal, is the former president of the Puerto Rico Popular Democratic Party (1997-2000). He is a staunch opponent of Puerto Rican statehood, preferring an improved version of the commonwealth status that the island nation currently enjoys. In 1998, he led a successful campaign against a Puerto Rican statehood ballot initiative. In his 1991 campaign for the Puerto Rico House of Representatives, focused on the issues of government reform, retirement benefits, and crime.

In the 107th Congress, was elected to be the vice president of the Democratic freshman class. During debate on the DoD Authorization bill, expressed the commitment of Puerto Ricans to support the President in his fight against terrorism; however, expressed some concern regarding language in the bill that would alter the commitment of the Navy to find sufficient alternative training grounds to Vieques by May 1, 2003. Earlier, had reaffirmed the commitment of the Government of Puerto Rico to find a solution to the situation in Vieques. Expressed outrage over the treatment of detainees by Federal authorities and the use of excessive force against peaceful protestors. Asserted "With the same spirit that Puerto Rican soldiers have defended democracy and justice around the world, today we defend the rise of the more that 9,000 US citizens that live in Vieques....Vieques is an issue of health, environment, and human rights." Urged support for H. Con. Res. 395, celebrating the 50th anniversary of the constitution of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. Said he was proud to represent his people and to celebrate this historic event.

Additional: After graduating from Harvard, worked for a judge on the Puerto Rico Supreme Court (1985-86) and for the chief judge on the First Circuit of Appeals in Boston (1987-88). Member, Congressional Hispanic Caucus and Democratic Homeland Security Task Force.

AF Bases: Puerto Rico IAP (ANG)

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